



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Consumer  
Service

Mountain  
Plains  
Region

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Reply to  
Attn. of: SP-97-10

Subject: Offer vs. Serve Under Nutrient Standard Menu Planning (NuMenus)

To: STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri ED,  
(Child Nutrition Programs) Montana OPI, Nebraska ED, North Dakota,  
South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming

A question was raised during our last State Agency Conference Call regarding a fruit and vegetable bar and how the items should be counted. The scenario is as follows:

A school participates in NuMenus. There are six items placed on a fruit and vegetable bar and a child can choose up to three items. This fruit and vegetable bar is offered in addition to the entree and milk. How many items are being offered to a child and how many must the child take in order for the meal to be reimbursable?

After discussion and consideration, we believe that this kind of question is to be answered by the menu planner. The menu planner must decide how a menu item is defined. This particular scenario could go either way. If the menu planner decides that a total of eight items are offered, each child would have to take six for a reimbursable meal. If the menu planner decides to offer a total of three items of which the fruit and vegetable bar is one, each child would need to take at least two menu items for a reimbursable meal.

See the examples below:

Example 1

Entree

Fruit and Vegetable Bar (canned peaches, fresh apples, carrot sticks, kiwi, broccoli, & green bean salad)

Milk

This menu is listed as three menu items. Each student must take at least two items including the entree. If the student takes the entree and peaches, the meal would be reimbursable.

Example 2

Entree  
Peaches  
Apples  
Carrot Sticks  
Kiwi  
Broccoli  
Green Bean Salad  
Milk

This menu is listed as eight menu items. Each student must take at least six items including the entree.

Again, it is up to the menu planner to determine how the menu items are to be identified. If you have any questions, please contact the Special Projects Section at (303) 844-0355.

*Ann C. De Groat*

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Regional Director  
Child Nutrition Programs

cc: CO DPHE, MT DPHHS, MO DH, WY DHSS

